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November 24, 2021

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To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Peter Loo 
Acting Chief Information Officer

REPORT BACK ON STRENGTHENING OVERSIGHT OF SCHOOL LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF JUNE 8, 2021)

On June 8, 2021, through Directives Numbers 4 and 5 in the *Strengthening Oversight of School Law Enforcement Services* Board of Supervisors' (Board) motion, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Office of Diversion and Re-entry (ODR), in coordination with County departments and external stakeholders, to report back with a plan to collect and publish data relevant to strengthening oversight of school law enforcement services. As described in the Board motion, the goal of increasing data collection around the school resource deputy program is to promote transparency, ensure students are receiving the services they need, and to better understand the program's impact on health, educational, and justice outcomes.

To achieve the objectives laid out in the Board motion, we followed a two-tiered process. First, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) evaluated the availability of data elements named in the Board motion by conducting a search of available data and conversations with data owners (agencies that are accountable for who have access to information assets). This led to the data categorizations and proposed plan for data collection and publication outlined in this memo. Second, after memo submission, ODR/Youth Diversion and Development and OCIO will convene a range of County and community stakeholders—those named in the Board motion and others central to this work, including Office of the Inspector General and the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative—to obtain stakeholder input and validate the data collection and publication plan outlined here.

Per OCIO's analysis, the data requested in the Board motion can be categorized into the following sets:

Category A: Data that has been collected under the Racial and Identity Profiling Act and is readily available. Category A data is currently available for Calendar Year (CY) 2019. OCIO is already in possession of this data. We anticipate CY 2020 data to be available in the coming months. Category A data includes the following data points:

- The Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015 data;
- School site crime incidents reported to, or observed by, the Los Angeles Sheriff Department (LASD);
- Number of times LASD was called to a school site and included for each incident: (a) the type of call; (b) related offense (e.g., trespassing, disruption, battery, possession of a weapon); and (c) resolution of call;
- Number of times LASD issued a citation to a student;
- Number of times LASD handcuffed, restrained, or summoned students on campus;
- Number of arrests of students made by LASD;
- The number of referrals by LASD of students from school sites to school administrator, school counselor, or other support staff; and
- Breakdown of above mentioned data by school site, offense, and student subgroup, including perceived age, race, ethnicity, gender, English fluency, and disability.

Category B: Data that may and/or may not yet have been collected. This category includes data owned by LASD, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Probation Department, and the District Attorney (DA). Category B data includes the following data points, with data owners indicated within parentheses:

- Randomly selected redacted/anonymous iStar and incident reports detailing incident(s) for which staff referred to law enforcement (LAUSD);
- Number of times any arrested student was offered or placed in diversion (LASD/DA/Probation);
- Number of inquiries into the Los Angeles County Regional Identification System by LASD personnel who are stationed at schools (LASD);
- Number of times LASD officers contacted students off the school site for matters pertaining to school-related incidents (LASD);
- Number of complaints and grievances against LASD officers (LASD);
- Copies of LASD logs pertaining to activities on school campuses (LASD); and
- Any other information LASD or other law enforcement believes is relevant (LASD).

Category C: Data that has not been collected. Category C data includes the following data point:

Qualitative or quantitative information provided by LASD, other law enforcement agencies, parents, teachers, school board members, community leaders, and community-based organizations that demonstrate a positive or negative impact to the juvenile.

Considering the urgent need to address the issue, while also recognizing the amount of data that needs to be collected, OCIO proposes that the data collection and publication plan follow a phased approach to enable earlier publication of readily available data while we concurrently pursue efforts to collect and analyze data that is not as readily available. Throughout the phases, ODR and OCIO will convene with the County, school district, and community stakeholders to obtain stakeholder and community input. These convenings will inform our data collection and publication approach and help contextualize collected data. ODR and OCIO will report back to the Board periodically with findings from the convenings and any substantive updates on data elements and the proposed timeline.

The phased approach for data collection and publishing is outlined below.

Phase 1 (Timeline: November 2021 – January 2022)

- OCIO will obtain, analyze, and publish Category A data (currently available for CY 2019), with publication of the first set of data in early 2022. OCIO and ODR will also initiate conversation with LASD on the possibility to obtain more timely data.
- OCIO will continue conversation with data owners for Category B data, explore how data can be shared, initiate Public Records Act requests for certain data points, and start drawing up Data Sharing Agreements, if needed.
- OCIO and ODR will explore options to engage an independent entity for Category C data collection with community input from stakeholder convenings.

Phase 2 (Timeline: February 2022 – May 2022)

- OCIO will publish the second installment of Category A data (2020 data).
- OCIO and ODR will initiate data sharing and analysis for Category B data.
- OCIO and ODR will pursue next steps to engage an independent entity to collect Category C data based on the options explored in Phase 1.

Phase 3 (Timeline: June 2022 – September 2022)

- OCIO will publish updated Category A data (2021 data, if already available).
- OCIO will publish Category B data.
- Independent entity will collect Category C data and provide data to the Inspector General or the Executive Director of the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative for their review and analysis.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me at (213) 253-5627 or ploo@cio.lacounty.gov or Irene Vidyanti, Program Specialist IV, at (213) 263-5608 or ividyanti@cio.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:TJM
PL:IV:jmn

c: All Department Heads



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

March 8, 2022

**Los Angeles County
Board of Supervisors**

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TO: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Christina R. Ghaly, M.D. 
Director

SUBJECT: **STRENGTHENING OVERSIGHT OF SCHOOL LAW
ENFORCEMENT SERVICES (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA
OF JUNE 8, 2021)**

Christina R. Ghaly, M.D.
Director

Hal F. Yee, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.
Chief Deputy Director, Clinical Affairs

Nina J. Park, M.D.
Chief Deputy Director, Population Health

Elizabeth M. Jacobi, J.D.
Administrative Deputy

On [June 8, 2021](#), the Board of Supervisors (Board) introduced the motion titled “Strengthening Oversight of School Law Enforcement Services.” In directive seven, the Board directed the Department of Health Services (DHS), Office of Diversion and Reentry’s (ODR) Division of Youth Diversion and Development (YDD) to report back in writing on the existing supports and community interventions currently implemented throughout school districts within Los Angeles County, (LA County), that eliminate or reduce the need for law enforcement intervention.

This report includes input from several stakeholders, such as school district administrators, board members, teachers, YDD providers, Restorative Justice (RJ) practitioners, and community organizers, and includes information gathered from both the Youth Justice Advisory Group (YJAG) and the [LA County: YJR Report October 2020](#). The report offers, an analysis of existing supports and community interventions currently implemented throughout the school districts that reduce or eliminate the need for law enforcement intervention, identifies the need for greater support, and offers recommendations for investment in school safety that not only stops the over-criminalization of youth but supports school communities in their pursuit of safety, youth empowerment and prevention of future harms.

In this discussion of interventions, YDD was requested to include information on the following:

- a. Estimates of program costs, input from school districts that currently contract for program services, and an assessment of the need for school climate and youth development supports and

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services in these school districts, including any data needed for the implementation of recommended programs and services;

- b. A discussion and consideration of strategies such as restorative justice programs, indigenous healing practices, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy interventions, Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS);
- c. How existing programs like the LA County's Community Schools Initiative (CSI) and the LA County's YDD program could be leveraged and expanded;
- d. Alignment with current criminal justice initiatives in LA County, including YJR and the Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) initiative; and
- e. Identification of barriers to connecting students with community-based services on campuses.

YDD has vetted its analysis through the YJAG Workgroup, called YDD Expansion, along with referenced stakeholders and outlined its final recommendations on pg. 14. Information connecting to the sub-directives a), b), and c) are incorporated into the section titled "Overview – Existing Programs & Proposed Programs" (pgs. 3-12), the response to sub-directive d) in the section titled "Alignment with Current Initiatives" (pgs. 12-13), and the response to sub-directive e) in the section titled "Identification of Barriers" (pgs. 13-14). For more on how this information was gathered, whose perspective is included, and considerations for whom further outreach is recommended, see the section titled "Process for Gathering Feedback" (pg. 2).

Process for Gathering Feedback

YDD has gathered data and feedback from stakeholders, by hosting one-on-one meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Representatives from school districts who have ended their contracts for the School Resource Deputy (SRD) program and implemented alternatives;
- Representatives from school districts who currently engage in active SRD contracts and staff SRD positions on their campus;
- School-based RJ Coordinators;
- Community-Based Organizations (CBO)'s running school-based programming;
- CBO's running youth diversion services as well as RJ trainings; and
- Community-organizing groups advocating for alternative school-safety programming in schools.

Additionally, YDD has leveraged and incorporated the information gathered from the ongoing YJAG meetings, where the group examines the practice of using law enforcement

officers in schools, as well as on expanding YDD referral pathways to include school sites with the goal of reducing and ending arrest or other punitive practices for youth on school campuses.

Overview – Existing Programs & Proposed Programs

YDD has explored existing programs in LA County that may be leveraged and expanded to eliminate or reduce the need for law enforcement intervention, as well as proposed alternatives put forth by the YJR Report and YJAG Workgroup. Where there is overlap between existing programs and proposals from the YJR Report and YJAG Workgroups, it is indicated below.

Existing Programs

School Districts Currently Implementing School Resource Deputies (SRDs)

YDD had the opportunity to speak with the Superintendent of the Lawndale School District (Lawndale SD) regarding their experience and active SRD contract. YDD learned their current contract invests approximately \$250,000 per year on one SRD to serve the eight schools in their district (YDD learned in the Lynwood district, SRD programs paid their deputy approximately \$350k per year). The Lawndale SD SRD operates on a rotating schedule to each school. The Superintendent shared that the SRD has been active in their district for many years and is reported to have a positive relationship with the community. However, there is consideration that this is a costly contract and interest in prioritizing PBIS and RJ as a primary response and resource to their district. The Lawndale SD has benefited as one of the PBIS pilot sites and worked hard to implement supports for students to address physical health, and social emotional wellbeing. The Superintendent has received varied feedback from staff and schoolboard members in exploring the cancellation of the SRD contract. Often the reliance on SRD is based on fear of worst-case scenario such as a weapon on campus, or external factors like, community violence entering the campus. However, it should be noted that if an incident escalated on campus, the schools would have the ability to engage their local law enforcement department to respond. The Superintendent believes there is great potential in utilizing the SRD funding towards more robust preventative and restorative programs so that schools may continue to become a place where youth can have their health and emotional needs met.

In considering alternatives for schools who feel unsure of redirecting SRD funds towards alternatives, it was recommended that YDD prioritize engagement of those school districts' superintendents and schoolboards and connect them to research and speakers from diversion partners and youth development programs to help better educate the districts on successful implementation of diversion programs. Further, it was recommended to engage the local families of the district in open discussion forums as the elected schoolboard members do not always reflect the community. For districts who are open to scaling back their SRD budget, but not yet eliminating their presence, it was recommended to offer a small-scale of YDD services in the form of a pilot program so the positive impact can be

demonstrated across the school-year and generate expertise and support of staff for future, increased scaling of an alternative model without the SRD contract.

School-Based Restorative Justice (RJ) Programming

RJ has been identified by the YJAG and YJR Report as a promising practice for an alternative to SRD models because of its ability to reduce suspensions and avoid furthering achievement gaps in youth; limit “net-widening” associated with school-based discipline; and the focus on accountability and youth empowerment. RJ emphasizes discussion and relationship building to minimize conflict, rather than traditional punishment like suspension. Because school-based RJ programs are largely in their infancy in the U.S., robust, formal evaluative reports on RJ in schools are limited.¹ This stated, several qualitative reviews and descriptive reports point to RJ models as successful on measures such as:

- Improved school climate;²
- Increased student connectedness, greater community and parent engagement, improved student academic achievements;³ and
- Decreases in discipline disparities, fighting, bullying, and suspensions.⁴

Existing studies state that for RJ programming to be effective, it must be embedded within the school culture.⁵ Attention also must be paid to the students’ environment beyond the school campus, such as considering the impact of trauma from students’ homes, surrounding neighborhoods, and academic success.⁶ The focus on a cultural shift and prevention is referred as Restorative Practices (RP). RP offers a spectrum of support such as prevention strategies to strengthen and build relationships within a school community, intervention methods when harm occurs within the community, and reintegration processes when a student has been removed then returns to the school community.

Over 30 schools within LA County already utilize some form of RJ programming, namely schools within the LA Unified School District (LAUSD) network. LAUSD made the commitment to begin implementing RJ models in 2013, which has decreased and for some, eliminated use of school police as a response to student behavioral incidences. While it is important to acknowledge that this motion looks at the SRD program, which is not used by LAUSD, there is much to be learned from the successes and challenges of the use of RJ in LAUSD schools.

One LAUSD collaborative program, The Partnership for LA Schools (The Partnership), has engaged RJ interventions and has seen meaningful transformation within 19 of LA’s most historically underserved schools in the communities of Boyle Heights, South LA, and Watts. The Partnership was established in 2007 and began receiving RJ trainings by the California Conference for Equity and Justice (CCEJ) in 2013. The Partnership uses a model of wrap-around care and has yielded successful behavioral and academic improvement in all grade levels. The Partnership reported that schools at large saw truancy rates drop by more than 50% percent, and suspension rates drop from 10% to 4.6% in participating middle schools,

and 4.6% to 1.9% amongst high schools. Costs for this program to serve approximately 14,200 students within 19 LAUSD elementary, middle and high schools are as follows:⁷

- \$9 million to \$11 million in annual revenue from foundation, corporate, and individual philanthropy; and
- Roughly \$650 annual cost per student.

The Partnership is not looking to expand to more school sites, rather offer a model to influence and work side-by-side with LAUSD, giving it a perspective on how policies and practices can and should create sustainable transformation for the district.

In developing recommendations for YDD's expansion, YJAG Workgroup #4 engaged RJ Coordinators staffed within LAUSD as well as RJ trainers and RJ diversion case managers from locally contracted CBO's that have worked with LAUSD sites for over the last five+ years. YDD staff then conducted one-on-one follow-up interview with those participating stakeholders to learn about their site's model and opportunities for continued investment. RJ Coordinators identified similar successes outlined through The Partnership model, but also reflected on opportunities to strengthen RJ programming at their sites and increase their capacity to handle more serious cases. RJ Coordinators expressed a need for ongoing and advanced trainings to continue deepening their skillset. Local RJ trainings can be found through CCEJ and include a multi-month approach. Cost estimates are as follows:

- \$25,000 to train a cohort of 18 school personnel;⁸
- For more on the CCEJ's training program, see the [guide](#).

Therefore, it is recommended that YDD and its community-based organization partners to collaborate with LA County School Districts to bolster training opportunities. The curriculum would enhance in-house intervention strategies and the districts' capacities to respond to student-to-student, student-to-faculty/staff, family-to-school related conflicts arise. Schoolwide trainings are also recommended to include foundational restorative practices like de-escalation, and crisis intervention for other school staff to prepare them to intervene during a time of need rather than expect the RJ Coordinator to be a sole responder and avoid, involving law enforcement. To meaningfully align with LA County's Criminal Justice initiatives, RJ programming needs additional/more sustainable funding, training, and support, and would benefit from a greater culture shift towards restorative practices and away from law enforcement reliance.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports Framework & Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Moving further, to promote healthier school climates and decrease the number of incidences that would require the need for crisis intervention and RJ diversion, the 2020 YJR Report recommends continued investment in the PBIS model. PBIS is a model built on the idea that continual teaching, modeling, recognizing, and reinforcing of positive

student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a positive climate of greater productivity, safety, and learning.⁹ Additionally, the PBIS framework is heavily data driven, which is used to guide aspects of the framework and tailor to individual school sites. Data is used to identify needs, interventions, student outcomes and efficacy. It is important to note that PBIS is an overarching framework and may look different in terms of implementation from school-to-school, as the framework is intended to be responsive and not a one-size fits all curriculum.¹⁰ Cost estimates for the implementation of PBIS are as follows:

- Average cost is \$53,216 per school site, and \$90 per student.¹¹

PBIS has been implemented throughout LA County and may provide a useful foundation for greater cultural change, improved school climate, and more implementation of additional programming to reduce the need for law enforcement intervention. To promote further cultural change and improve school climate, it may be useful to explore the extent to which the PBIS framework can be leveraged and integrated with RJ programming. YDD reached out to representatives from the LA County Office of Education's (LACOE's) PBIS team but were unable to schedule time with them. YDD believes it would be beneficial to learn more from LACOE's PBIS team.

The PBIS framework has some overlap with the 2020 YJR Report and 2021 YJAG proposals, placing emphasis on positive and proactive supports, positive school culture, culturally relevant practices informed by community, and deeper engagement with family systems. The PBIS framework is tiered, providing additional support and engagement to youth who have greater need. Within the PBIS framework, as the need for greater support is identified, students have access to multi-disciplinary intervention and coordination teams, similar to the idea of Youth Empowerment Support (YES) teams and Care Coordinators recommended through the YJR Report and YJAG proposals (*see Proposed Programs section for more on YES teams and Care Coordinators*). More research is needed to identify the extent to which the PBIS framework aligns with the YRJ and YJAG recommendations, but a preliminary analysis shows notable overlap, indicating that this is a useful framework to integrate in the YRJ model for school climate and safety.

LA County's Community Schools Initiative (CSI)

Another existing program, CSI, has demonstrated successful socio-emotional engagement with students as an alternative to SRD's that could be further invested and expanded at more school sites in LA County. The CSI model has a presence at nearly 5,000 school across the Country. CSI aims to disrupt poverty and address longstanding inequities.¹² With the LA based CSI model being piloted at both LACOE and LAUSD school sites, Community School Coordinators (CSC) are staffed at each school to function as a facilitator of support services alongside children and families with key initiative priorities such as: mental health support, basic needs support, family engagement, physical health and well-being, support for special populations, college and career readiness, behavior interventions and supports, enrichment and intervention programs.

In 2019, the Board passed a motion to fund pilot programs with prevention services and CSI implementation for three years across 15 LACOE sites and 40 LAUSD school sites. The cost of the program over a three-year time period is as follows:

- LACOE (15 sites) \$7,720, 348
- LAUSD (40 sites) \$9,695, 935

In a recent 2018 CSI report, the CSI program at Social Justice Humanitas Academy (SJHA) demonstrated the positive impact of their presence over a four-year timespan. SJHA is located in the city of San Fernando Valley where 90% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and adversity involving community violence and poverty are common. CSI's model is based on "six essential strategies: curriculum, teaching, wraparound services, restorative practices, engagement and leadership" and has positively driven:

- Attendance of students from 62% to 80%;
- Graduation rates from 83% to 94%, (compared to LAUSD's average of 67%); and
- Suspension rates down to 0.2%; and
- 93% of students reporting a feeling of safety within their school community.¹³

YDD is currently undertaking an effort to scale services among school districts within the YDD regional networks, similar to that of the CSI model. In YDD's model for school partnership, it is recommended that each campus have a full-time program support specialist for service coordination between participating schools and the broader Youth Development Region (YDR) regional hubs (which include access to YDD providers). CSI should explore adding YDD as a partner amongst its existing LA County agency partners, to quickly expand the CSI model, as YDD is in the process of service expansion. Additionally, LA County may want to consider expanding the CSI model beyond the initial pilot sites, as this program has the potential to compliment much of the YJR and YJAG recommendations, as well as the expansion of YDD referral pathways.

Community Based Organizations (CBO) Contracted Programming on School Sites in Lieu of Law Enforcement

Lynwood Unified School District (Lynwood USD) Case Example:

The Lynwood USD offers a success story with their experience contracting alternative CBO programming to respond to school safety and other student needs without the use of SRDs. The Lynwood USD resides within LA County's Service Providing Area (SPA) six, a region where data reflects health disparities, poverty, youth homelessness, and high-risk for justice system involvement. The school district's 2018-2019 Education Statistics reported concerning academic outcomes such as: only 2.71% of the population over the age of 25 with a bachelor's degree or other four-year college degree, 38.26% of the area's population over the age of 25 with high school diplomas or high school General Equivalency

Diploma's, and ratios of 886 students per counselor.¹⁴ However, as efforts and investments have been made in recent years to divest from campus SRD's and redirect funding to help implement RP, youth development programming and other responsive resources, the district is witnessing improved outcomes of students' quality of education, emotional well-being, and physical safety.

YDD had the opportunity to speak with the Lynwood USD's President of the Board of Education, Gary Hardie (Hardie), and the Executive Director of the Social Justice Learning Institute (SJLI), Derek Steele (Steele). YDD learned of their multi-year efforts that cultivated a more responsive and supportive school environment that could offer a model alternative to SRD's on campus. Their demonstrated success in restorative services and youth development programming built the confidence that resulted in the 2020 Lynwood USD vote to cancel their SRD contract. Lynwood USD and SJLI's process is described below:

- **Gathering Youth Data:** When SJLI first began programming with the Lynwood USD, they surveyed students' experience of SRDs on campus, relationships with teachers and staff, and the school climate at-large. Students reported they didn't feel welcomed, felt overly criminalized and often harassed by officers on campus; felt as though they were not welcomed or did not belong in Lynwood and that their culture was not recognized or honored. Lynwood USD leaders also identified the importance of listening to students and creating a school culture in which students' experiences are a priority in the pursuit of safety.
- **Lynwood Safe Schools Collaborative & Development of Incident Response Protocols:** In response, the Lynwood USD developed a "Safe Schools Collaborative" which is a set of response protocols needed to address any threat to students' safety on campus. The Safe Schools Collaborative included all levels of the school environment, such as: district officials, unions, parents, teachers, law enforcement, and staff. Over a series of extensive planning meetings, the Safe School Collaborative reviewed the spectrum of common to rare safety scenarios that have or could occur on their campus and developed a step-by-step protocol of action measures and leadership roles all personnel would enact in case of common, low-level conflict to high-level emergency preparedness. A core value they uplifted in the process to arrive to a police-free school, was that everyone must be involved in owning school safety.

This past year, the efficacy of their protocol was tested with one of the most serious scenarios possible happened, an active shooting. A shooting occurred on campus at a football game. Hardie was present during the incident and active in the de-escalation process. He was able to share that Lynwood USD staff were prepared, responded accordingly and the incident was safely, quickly, and successfully brought under control using the protocol developed by the collaborative, without any need for law enforcement involvement.

Redirecting Funds & Establishing Supportive Programs

After terminating the \$350,000 SRD contract, the Lynwood USD began funding more supportive programs for students, such as:

- 24/7 mental health hotline;
- Tutor hotline;
- Campus aids (many of which are parent/caregivers of current students and/or alumni);
- Public Information Officer along with software to identify potential threats or conflicts being communicated within the school community; and
- Establishing an equity department.

Due to the new programs and department, the Lynwood USD and SJLI helped organize a network of 80+ community partners related to health, wellness, and other foundational resources so that youth could have access to basic needs services. Hardie and Steele underscored the importance of investing not only in crisis intervention after a harm incident has occurred, but also in prevention, such as strength-based empowerment, and holistic support that reaches beyond academic outcomes. While the funds diverted from the SRD contract were important in creating supportive programming for youth at Lynwood USD schools, it was also expressed that additional funding would be beneficial to create more robust support for youth. For example, one of SJLI's most effective models of student engagement, the "Rising Scholars Program" alone costs \$125k a year to implement for one school. Leveraging Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and public grant funding, the Lynwood USD was able to pool funding to supplement their vision, however, concerns were raised over program funding sustainability.

When discussing school districts who are considering the removal of SRDs from their campus, Hardie and Steele acknowledged that every community is going to have different needs. They recommend YDD can provide a supportive role to schools by providing a list of pre-approved and vetted youth-serving agencies and diversion providers available in their region to help establish restorative justice programming. Further Hardie and Steele recommend YDD help coordinate and/or facilitate schoolwide training for teachers and staff to better recognize signs of student behavioral issues and best-practice interventions, with an emphasis on RJ processes.

The Black Student Achievement Plan (BSAP)

In June of 2020, the LAUSD School Board voted to cut \$25 million from the LA School Police Department (LASPD) budget and redirect those funds to support African American student achievement. The BSAP presented an alternative plan for student safety without the use of school police and was approved by the LAUSD Board of Education in the February 2020-21 school year. LAUSD invested \$19 million of the \$25 million to create a team for "School Climate & Critical Wellness" programming to serve approximately 50

participating schools. This action was taken in response to tremendous leadership from Black students, parents, and families with broad public support, largely in response to the fact that Black students make up 25% of all students cited, diverted, or arrested by LASPD despite only being 8% of the total student population. The creation and implementation of this plan is a joint effort shared across LAUSD and community partners.

YDD had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with leaders from The Brother Sons Selves Coalition, the coalition of CBOs that helped both organize and now oversee implementation of the BSAP. The model requires a team of personnel, including School Safety Coaches (SSC), in each school devoted to leading the school climate transformation process. SSC's are ideally hired from within the community and focus on student and family relationship building, and work at individual schools to implement positive approaches to school safety designed to keep students in school. While the BSAP is designed to reflect the needs of Black students in particular, they recommended YDD to replicate the "School Climate & Critical Wellness" model programming at other school sites as an alternative to SRD contracts.

The BSAP "School Climate & Critical Wellness" model's approximate total cost is the following:

Estimated Budget per School--High School/Middle School (per 500-students):

- Four SSCs, \$273,600;
- One additional Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW), \$134,75;
- One additional RJ Coordinator, \$130,000;
- One additional Academic Counselor, \$130,000

Estimated Budget Per School-- Elementary School

- Two SSCs, \$136,800;
- 0.5 additional RJ coordinator, \$65,000;
- One additional PSW, \$134,750; and
- One additional Academic Counselor, \$130,000.

CCEJ Model (school-based referrals)

In sharing one-to-one dialogue with both RJ case managers and RJ trainers who work within the CCEJ, (an LA- based CBO providing RJ services), YDD had the opportunity to learn about their successful RJ diversion model through their program, Healing Harms. This model was highlighted for their ability to receive school-based referrals, and to provide an example for program costs. This program receives cases from law enforcement, the Department of Children and Families Services as well as LAUSD and LBUSD school districts. CCEJ partners with school districts where school safety officers are still active on campus, however they advocate for referrals to be sent directly from the school without engaging law enforcement whenever possible. With additional instruction through CCEJ's training program, school districts could grow their capacity to handle in-house diversions.

- The average cost for case management of a diversion referral can range from \$350 to over \$1,000 depending on the complexity of the referral.

Proposed Programs

In April 2018, LAUSD brought together community members, parents, and longstanding equity advocates such as Advancement Project California, Community Coalition and InnerCity Struggle to collectively build the framework for a new Student Equity Need Index (SENI) that measures and ranks schools by level of need. The current SENI evaluates targeted students (foster youth, low-income, English learners); students experiencing homelessness; student achievement (incoming test scores); school climate (suspensions, expulsions, dropout rates, administrative reports); neighborhood conditions (asthma, non-fatal gunshot injuries). Importantly, LAUSD also developed a new funding formula that tied the distribution of \$282 million to a school's ranking on SENI, while at the same time using SENI to inform some decisions around staffing and other intervention programming, which explored the use of funding without SRD's. LAUSD's funding formula looks to expand upon these efforts to send more resources to the highest-need schools and will result in more supports such as counselors, social workers, nurses, and intervention specialists that will immediately impact students and begin to address the many years of inconsistent funding and underinvestment that has impacted the highest-need schools. [\[xix\]](#)

Several additional programs and supports have been proposed through the YJAG and YJR report to eliminate or reduce the need for law enforcement intervention. The programs described below can reduce the need for law enforcement at school sites and be implemented alongside some of the existing programs explored above. Additionally, YDD's expansion will include partnerships with schools, and eventually school-based referrals (both formal and informal), further broadening LA County's tools for prevention and intervention.

YDD Services Expansion to School Sites

As YDD continues to expand its capacity with a second cohort of provider agencies, it will begin to establish referral partnerships from school districts across the county. It is a priority of YDD to establish relationships with schools and provide in-house learning sessions for school administration, teachers, staff, and students to introduce the YDD provider organization(s) and broader YDR services within the local district region. In doing so, the school community at-large will gain awareness and understanding of how to access YDD providers as a resource for school-based referrals in lieu of law enforcement.

YJAG Workgroup #4 recommends establishing an Educational Partnerships Management team to collaborate with YDD providers and conduct outreach to schools and other youth-serving systems. The partnership team will identify opportunities to build capacity for community-based youth development and restorative practices, while developing an incentives and assessment structure with the goal of expanding diversion and development services to all school sites Countywide. The team would also work to ensure alignment

and coordination between YJR and efforts in schools around RJ, credible messengers, ending criminalization and racial equity. Further, the YJAG Workgroup #4 recommends YDD expand its YDD steering committee school-based stakeholders from the YDD regions, including youth, community representatives, and key school district staff, to guide ongoing engagement for school districts in the areas of youth development, school climate (away from criminalization), preventing youth contact with law enforcement, and diversion programming. A recommended goal of the expanded steering committee is to access efficacy and use of alternative youth services to promote culture and policy change which remedies the harms of the historic criminalization of Black, Brown, and Indigenous youth in schools.

YES Teams

To promote greater school climate and safety, move towards the goal of reducing the use of law enforcement in schools, and achieve greater alignment with current initiatives, the YJAG Workgroups (specifically Workgroups #4 and #6) and YJR Report recommend assembling YES teams to respond to harms originating in schools, providing school personnel with partners on-site to engage in alternative responses and foster youth development. These teams are the principal vehicle to achieve a changed collaborative decision-making approach in communities and schools. School sites anchor important opportunities for YES team engagement. Outlined below are recommendations to expand staffing, design, and develop YES teams as the modality to advance collaborative decision-making at school sites as a healthier alternative to law enforcement presence.

The YES teams comprise three sub teams: first responders, resource and accountability facilitators, and legal advocates. The YES teams role is to ensure that responses to harms and legal responses are restorative and healing while anchored within the principles of youth development YES teams proposed through YJAG and YJR include the following positions staffed full-time at schools for YDD engagement, with the aim of reducing the use of law enforcement services:

- Care Coordinator
- Credible Messenger
- RJ Coordinator

When an incident of harm or conflict occurs on campus, rather than engaging a law enforcement officer, the YES team will be engaged. Within their regional network, the YES team has access to provide linkages to additional support outside of the school systems as well, ensuring youth have access to a robust network of support. ([For more on YES teams, see YJR Report pages 44 and 45](#)). This team will provide: a more holistic and sustainable resource to process root issues underlying in the youth's life, respond directly to the dynamics surrounding the incident of harm, provide an intervention approach that offers an opportunity for accountability, conflict transformation, relationship skills-building and minimizing of future recidivism. YJAG Workgroup #6 recommends the YDD's diversion expansion plan incorporate a YES team coordinator.

Alignment with Current Initiatives

The intersections of LA County's Criminal Justice initiatives, such as YJR and ATI envision a system that is thoughtfully designed around prevention and addressing unmet needs, uplifts human agency and collaborative decision making, provides appropriate interventions, reduces racial disparities in system involvement, and robustly invests in community resources. Current practices in addressing conflict in schools are mixed in their alignment with these goals. Current practices and programs implemented by LA County schools include the use of varying law enforcement agencies, the use of school-based RJ Coordinators, the CSI, the use of the PBIS framework, and the use of various CBO programming with school-based touchpoints. While some of the above programming (RJ, CSI, PBIS) shares degrees of alignment with the referenced LA County Criminal Justice initiatives, the programs are not necessarily comprehensive in their reach across LA County and would benefit from deeper integration across LA County based youth serving systems, as well as services offered by CBOs.

Current models, which often rely on law enforcement, stemmed from growing safety concerns on school campuses and became widespread in the 1990. School shootings over the last two decades have often led school districts to justify more police presence at schools across the country. Research demonstrates that law enforcement officers stationed on school campuses successfully intervene in roughly 1% of incidents, and that measures to improve safety through prevention policies lead to better outcomes.¹⁵

Locally, the movement to remove police in LA gained support from United Teachers Los Angeles, the teachers' union representing tens of thousands of teachers in the district. The union's president, Alex Caputo-Pearl, said the union's board of directors voted 35-2 to disband the district's police department, which with more than 400 sworn officers is the largest independent school police force in the nation. Echoing the beliefs of some students, Caputo-Pearl stated that the \$70 million the district spends on the department could be better allocated to mental health services.¹⁶

It is understood that a mass-school shooting is a worse-case scenario, however the recommendations align with a culture shift at-large, as the data has shown evidence that the presence of law enforcement simply exacerbates the school to prison pipeline by increasing the percentage of school-based arrests for low-level, non-violent behaviors that traditionally would have been responded to by in-house school personnel. "Schools with police reported as much as 3.5x arrests than those who don't, impacting Black and Brown youth disproportionately."¹⁷ There is a growing body of research that regular interactions with police officers both in and out of school have a harmful effects on students' academic performance. This is particularly true for Black students, who are more likely to exhibit signs of trauma as a result of these interactions and many students of color (and Black youth in particular) have the experience of feeling targeted, less engaged, and less safe.¹⁸ According to data from the 2018, in the LA metro area, Black students are four to eight times more likely to miss school due to suspension than white students and Latino students

are 1.2 times more likely to miss school due to a suspension than their white peers.”¹⁹ These racial disparities in school discipline with increased classroom absences further subsequently increase the academic performance gap. For example, LA County, about 34% of Black students "met or exceeded" the standard for English on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress tests during the 2018-19 school year. In mathematics, it was just 21%. Meanwhile, 69% of white students, "met or exceeded" the standard for English, and 59% did so for math.²⁰

For these reasons, the use of law enforcement in schools does not align with the Criminal Justice transformation initiatives in LA County, such as YJR and ATI. The initiatives put forth the aim of reducing LA County's reliance on law enforcement, replacing it instead with comprehensive systems of care that address the underlying needs of the community and root causes of conflict and violence.

Identification of Barriers

Feedback consistently shared was that school communities lacked awareness and clarity of resources available for youth through YDD. As the recommended YDR are established it is important to assure visibility throughout school districts and the youth and parent/caregiver communities. In order to strengthen public awareness and utilization of services, YJAG recommends community outreach and education campaigns to increase engagement, support, participation, youth leadership, and collective community knowledge of the resources available. One mechanism recommended for reaching this goal is through YDD region days, which could be used to build towards long-term engagement of organizations and community members in attendance to help lay the foundation for a countywide youth development network and sustained community engagement.

Another barrier includes youth who are already disengaged from their school community as less likely to voluntarily commit to youth development programming. In an effort to effectively connect these youth to services through the YDR, including YDD providers, and other youth-serving institutions, it is recommended to supplement staffing at the YDR with a Youth Resource Navigator (YRN). The YRN will be housed in a YDD- funded CBO/Provider and will provide young people and their families guidance to local and/or affiliated YDD services (including YDD providers and the new YDD Youth Development Providers). The YRN will work closely with the different organizations and staff located within the YDD region they are placed in, which will include YDD providers, credible messengers, YES Teams, and local schools. Additionally, YRNs will build relationships with youth-serving organizations outside of the YDN/regions as a step to keep strengthening and expanding partnerships in the region. YDD, along with the local CBOs/YDD providers, will provide training and support for YRNs, making sure each person feels grounded in YDD values and supported in their role. YRNs should collaborate closely with young people, their families, and if necessary, the YES teams working with them to consistently provide support in decision making.

Costs at a Glance

Below is an overview of the different program costs mentioned throughout the report. Note that these costs are for a variety of different program types and models, and this chart is not intended to be a recommendation or apples-to-apples comparison, but rather to display the cost data in one place. Further, cost data reflects available data at the time of this report, often demonstrating different metrics. We have adjusted the cost where possible but did not have the data to do so for every program. For deeper context, please reference the respective sections of the report.

Program	Cited Cost	Adjusted Cost Per 500 Students
The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools	\$650 per student	\$325,000
PBIS Framework & MTSS	Avg \$53,216.00 per school site, \$90/ student	\$45,000
Black Student Achievement Plan – High school	\$668,350 per 500 students	\$668,350
Black Student Achievement Plan – Elementary	\$331,800 per 500 students	\$668,350
CCEJ Diversion referral	\$350 - \$1,000 per referral depending on case, \$675 avg	\$337,500
CSI LAUSD	\$7,720,348 for 15 sites	N/A
CSI LACOE (various County districts)	\$9,695,935 for 40 sites	N/A
Restorative Justice Training (CCEJ)	\$25,000 per cohort of 18 school personnel	N/A
SRD Program	\$350,000 per deputy	N/A
SJLI Rising Scholars	\$125,000 per school	N/A

Recommendations

In-depth recommendations and next steps can be found woven throughout the report. For a summary overview of recommendations, please see below:

- Increase direct diversion and service referral pathways from schools, both to YDD and to CBOs capable of receiving direct referrals (reducing or eliminating the need for law enforcement as a middleman in this specific referral pathway);
- Further explore, and eventually implement YDD's model for school partnership, which proposes a full-time program support specialist for service coordination between schools and service providers;
- Explore integrating YDD as a CSI partner;
- Consult with PBIS on how the framework is working throughout LA County and explore the extent to which the PBIS framework can be leveraged and integrated

with RJ programming. YDD was unable to connect with LACOE to understand their PBIS model for this report, and we believe it would be beneficial to open conversations in the future;

- Consult with The Partnership for LA Schools to engage in a conversation around best practices and strategies for implementing wrap around services and engaging parents and communities on school-sites not presently contracted with The Partnership;
- YDD continue to engage school stakeholders and YJAG Workgroups around school safety, moving towards implementation of YES teams YDD referral pathways and partnerships; and
- Conduct additional landscaping calls with districts holding SRD contracts. YDD was able to connect with one such district and believes it would be beneficial to hold additional listening sessions with superintendents, schoolboards and local families within these districts.

If you have any questions, you may contact me or your staff may contact Refugio Valle by email at RValle3@dhs.lacounty.gov.

CRG:rv

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors

Citations

¹ Fronius, T., Darling-Hammond, S., Perrson, H., Guckenburg, S., Hurley, N., Petrosino, A. (2019). Restorative justice in U.S. schools: An updated Research Review

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